

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 02205 151708Z

51

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AEC-11 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 CIEP-02

COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 FEA-02 FPC-01 H-03 INR-10

INT-08 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 OMB-01 PM-07 RSC-01 SAM-01

SCI-06 SP-03 SS-20 STR-08 TRSE-00 EUR-25 IO-14 DLOS-06

DRC-01 /192 W

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R 151625Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5150

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 2205

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, TS, LY

SUBJ: REPORT THAT LIBYAN GOVERNMENT HAS GRANTED

AMERICAN FIRM OFFSHORE OIL CONCESSION IN

TUNISIAN WATERS

1. MINISTRY OF ECONOMY, CHEDLI AYARI, HAS ASKED ME TO HELP HIM IN ASCERTAINING WHETHER, AS ALLEGED BY FRENCH COMPANY, LIBYAN GOVERNMENT HAS GRANTED OFFSHORE OIL CONCESSION TO AMERICAN FIRM OF AMOSEAS IN AREA DISPUTED BETWEEN TUNISIA AND LYBYA. TUNISIANS UNDERSTAND CONCESSION LIES OVER CONTINENTAL SHELF IN AREA CLAIMED BY TUNISIANS BUT STILL IN DISPUTE. BEFORE RAISING MATTER WITH LIBYANS, TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT WANTS TO BE SURE IT HAS ITS FACTS STRAIGHT. AMOSEAS IS CONSORTIUM REPORTEDLY HEADED BY AMOCO.

2. AYARI SAID THAT TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN UNABLE TO COME TO AGREEMENT WITH LIBYAN GOVERNMENT CONCERNING OFFSHORE DEMARCATION LINE. LIBYANS HAVE REFUSED TO AGREE TO ANY LINE, WHILE TUNISIANS CLAIM THAT THEIR 12-MILE TERRITORIAL
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PAGE 02 TUNIS 02205 151708Z

SEAS EXTEND STRAIGHT OUT FROM KERKENNAH ISLANDS.

3. SINCE LIBYAN-TUNISIAN RELATIONS ARE ALREADY STRAINED, TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT IS RELUCTANT TO MAKE THIS A MAJOR ISSUE. BIT, CONTINUED AYARI, IF IT DEVELOPS THAT AMOSEAS IS INDEED PLANNING TO DRILL IN THIS AREA, TUNISIANS WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO MAKE A DEMARCHE. AYARI IMPLIED THAT SINCE THIS FIRM IS AMERICAN, IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE FOR US TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS FROM OUR SIDE.

4. WE NOTE FROM TRIPOLI 177 THAT AMOSEAS IS ONE OF THREE U.S. OIL COMPANIES IN LIBYA RECENTLY NATIONALIZED. WE ALSO NOTE FROM ROME 2857 THAT AGIP WAS RECENTLY GRANTED "PROMISING OFFSHORE AREA NEAR TUNISIAN BORDER."

5. ACTIONS REQUESTED: WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION ON THIS MATTER WHICH DEPARTMENT OR EMBASSY TRIPOLI CAN PROVIDE, INCLUDING COORDINATES OF ALLEGED NEW CONCESSION, IF AVAILABLE.
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Message Attributes

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